Countries Visited by High-powered Indian Delegations

1733. SHRI RAMDAS AGARWAL: Will the PRIME MINSITER be pleased to state:

(a) the number of countries visited by the high-powered Indian delegations after the assumption of Power by new Government at the Centre;

(b) whether any memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was signed by Indian side, if so, with which country; and

(c) what are the area-wise details and present stage of progress (project-wise) and estimated cost involved therein in each case?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI VASUNDHRA RAJE): (a) to (c) information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

NAM meet in Columbia

1734. SHRI S. M. KRISHNA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Non-Alignment Meet (NAM) was recently held in Colombia, if so, the outcome thereof;

(b) the extent to which Government have been able to convince fellow countries on recent nuclear tests and the situation arising out of the sanctions imposed on India by different countries; and

(c) the response Government got from other countries on the issue?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI VASUNDHRA RAJE): (a) Yes, Sir. The Ministers of Foreign Affairs and Heads of Delegation of the Non-Aligned countries met in Cartagena de Indias, Colombia, from 19-20 May, 1998 to prepare the Movement for the summit to be held in Durban, South Africa in September 1998 and to consider issues of major importance for the Movement including global political, social and economic issues. A Communique was issued at the end of this meeting giving the position of the Movement on the issues discussed.

(b) At the NAM meeting in Colombia, Government have informed the member countries of the rationale underlying the decision to authorise the nuclear tests.

(c) The Communique issued at the end of the NAM meeting does not contain any reference to India's nuclear tests.

Indo-US Talks

1735. SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether High-level Indo-US strategic talks were recently held in the Capital;

(b) if so, what are the main issues discussed with the U.S. team; and

(c) what is the response received on the issues raised by Government?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI VASUNDHRA RAJE): (a) to (c) yes Sir. India and the United States have been engaged in a wide-ranging dialogue on bilateral regional and global issues intended to broaden and deepen our mutually-beneficial relations and identify areas of cooperation. Cooperation in some areas including science and technology and environment, health and energy have been discussed as part of this wide-ranging dialogue.

Repeal of pressler law

1736. SHRIMATI KAMLA SINHA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of US proposal to repeal the Pressler Law;

(b) if so, what are the implications involved in it so far as the country's interests are concerned; and